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Title: Times Of Reverence

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Though all Valar are worshipped yearlong by the Elves, certain periods of the year are attributed to particular Valar. These times are known as holy times of reverence and are believed to hold great spiritual power and keys to understanding the mysteries of creation. During their time of reverence, the Valar bestow great wisdom and blessings upon the Elves. In return, Elves perform sacred rituals or offer prayers as thanks for their gifts.

Times of reverence are particularly significant for Elves with a patron Valar. During their patron Valar's reverence, Elves experience a stronger and closer bond with the Divine. They often receive visions of gifts of great power. Good luck is said to follow them and much of Life's beauty is shown to their eyes. For such reasons, Elves will often perform elaborate rituals for their patron Valar's time of reverence; the closeness and strength of their bond with the Divine making their offerings of great value and joy.

All Elves observe the times of reference, though they may not overtly partake in worshipping activities.

Some do so out of respect for their patron Valar, others out of their upbringing and customs of their family, race and profession. Simply because an Elf does not participate in rituals of the time of reverence does not mean they do not honor or venerate the Valar in their own way. All activities partaken in during the times of reverence depend on the individual Elf and his/her community. Whereas one Elf may spend a moment of quiet meditation and communion with the Divine, another may perform a powerful and elaborate ceremony. Thus times of reverence and related activities are considered a private matter, even if shared by the scope of an Elven race or Elven profession. The times of reverence are as follows:

January (Narvinye) - Aule  
Aule's time of reverence is particularly honored by Elven crafters, for Aule is the patron of artisans. It is common practice for crafters to donate some of their wares to temples and shrines as offerings for Aule. Those skilled in masonry spend the month of January creating effigies and idols in Aule's image. These effigies are known to bring unprecedented skill and good luck to the owners, thus they adorn many crafting halls. Many crafters spend time in great meditation, for it is said that Aule bestows upon worthy Elves sacred words which open mountains and bring forth veins of precious

metals and stones. If a winter is particularly long and cold, Elves pray to Aule to bring warmth into their lands. Children and young-and-heart have snowball fights; their laughter is said to warm the heart of Aule and bring sunshine from beneath the clouds. Colorful snowmen are displayed before most homes, showing the of winter and ensuring Aule's graces for the Elven kin.

February (Nenime) -  
Varda

February is known as Varda's time of reverence, for it is when stars illuminate the sky and usher warmth back to Nature. The most important day during this time is Re en' Cornea , Day of Hearts. During Varda's time of reverence, much time is spent promoting and observing beauty - be it beauty of one's own creation or that of Nature. It is with great pride that the Elves show their works of arts and crafts, for Varda's lovely face is reflected in each beautiful creation. Star gazing is popular among Elven seers and enchanters, for the fate of Arda is said to be written in the stars. No effigies or statuettes are made for Varda, as none can capture her beauty in a simple object. Instead, more abstract means are used to praise her: prayers, poetry and tales. Elves blessed by Varda, especially those who seek her as patron Valar, are known to see and feel beauty in every form.

Varda graces beautiful  
form to lovers and Elves  
who marry during her  
time of reverence,  
March (Sulime) - Yavanna  
Yavanna's time of  
reverence is particularly  
honored by young Elven  
wives and maidens seeking  
children, for she is the  
Valier of fertility and  
beginning of Nature. Elven  
rangers sing praise to  
Yavanna during her time  
of reverence, for she  
brings the Forest back to  
Life. Of greatest  
importance during her  
time of reverence is  
celebration of Sheelala,  
holy day of Nature's  
beginning. Gifts of seeds  
and fresh spring water  
are left at natural  
temples to gain Yavanna's  
graces. Elven gardeners  
and farmers in particular  
are observant of  
Yavanna's time of  
reverence, for she blesses  
crops and plants with  
good growth. As a part  
of the ritual to celebrate  
Her, Elves craft horns of  
plenty (cornucopias -  
horns filled with fresh  
fruits, nuts and effigies  
of Yavanna's grace) and  
share them with their  
families. March is a  
particularly good time to  
plant seeds for the  
spring harvest, for the  
ground is more fertile  
during Yavanna's time of  
reverence.

April (Viresse) - Vana  
Vana's time of reverence  
is particularly honored by  
the Elven youth. Valier of  
birth and youthfulness,  
Vana is best honored  
through laughter and joy.  
As spring enters the  
lands, winter clothing is  
tucked away, and youth is  
free to dance through

the forests. The most important day of Vana reverence is Edhelie Marth , or April Fools. During this holy day, rites of passage into adulthood are performed. Thus April time of reverence is a time of growth and coming of age. Elder Elves pray for Vana's blessings, for she brings gifts of joy and youthfulness to those that honor her. Often times, bright ribbons are tied around Elven door steps, so joy and laughter enter each home freely.

May (Lotesse) Xwme and Nessa  
May honors both Orome and Nessa, Valar of the forests. Their time of reverence is of particular significance to the Elven druids, for it is when the forests are open and ancient knowledge is bestowed upon those worthy of it. During the month of may, most druids undertake a pilgrimage to visit the Spirit Woods and the sacred woods of the realm. Ancient Oaks and Yew trees share the mysteries of the Forest and Her creatures. May is also a time for Elven archers and hunters to sharpen their skills. Nessa, Valier of freedom and of hunt, is said to walk the forests with her blessed stags and blesses hunters with a sharp eye and steady hand. Orome and Nessa's time of reference is known best for the unified efforts of Elves to purge Sosaria's forests of evil.

June (Narie) – Manwe

Manwe's time of reverence is particularly observed by Elven paladins. Though it is time of great prayer and meditation on their skills, it is also a time of travel for the Elven paladins. Each of Sosaria's shrines is visited, and gold donated as offering to the Valar. Of great importance is Faradome , when Manwe is said to bless the champions of Elven kin with strength and skill. Jousts to test the fine skills of Elven protectors are held, when both hearts of maidens and respect of brethren are earned. Manwe blesses the Elves with courage and ability to overcome obstacles, no matter their size.

Continued in Volume 2  
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